

Sweden joins European trend, adopts COVID vaccination pass

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Sweden is introducing a digital COVID-19 vaccination certificate for public gatherings and events with more than 100 people indoors, authorities said Wednesday.

The move follows similar steps by other European Union countries amid a recent continental rise in COVID-19 cases.

"This is tough news to give. We all want the [pandemic](#) to be over," Social Affairs Minister Lena Hallengren said, adding that the certificate will be adopted from Dec. 1.

Sweden has previously stood out among European nations for its comparatively hands-off response to the pandemic.

Culture Minister Amanda Lind said it was not mandatory to show the vaccination [certificate](#), but those who cannot present it will have to follow certain restrictions. She said it was up to the organizers of an event to decide what the restrictions should be.

The introduction is "a measure we see as necessary in order not to burden the [health care system](#)," said Karin Tegmark Wisell, the head of the Swedish Public Health Agency.

The vaccination pass will not apply in restaurants for the time being, Tegmark Wisell said.

Sweden has not gone into a lockdown or closed businesses during the pandemic, relying instead on citizens' sense of civic duty to control infections. Authorities have emphasized individual responsibility instead of government health measures.

The Scandinavian country has officially recorded 15,107 deaths, with 13 of them being reported Wednesday. Official figures show that 85.3% of the population age 16 and over have gotten the first shot, while 81.7% have had two jabs.

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